U.S. Department of State
Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor
2201 C Street, NW, Room 7827
Washington, D.C. 20520
**http://www.state.gov/j/drl/**

# Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) for Applications

**Updated: July 2015**

## Table of Contents

*PLEASE REFER TO THIS DOCUMENT WHEN PREPARING AN APPLICATION.*

## Eligibility

### Eligible Applicants

The Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) welcomes applications in response to DRL Notices of Funding Opportunities (NOFO) from U.S.-based and foreign-based non-profit organizations/non-government organizations (NGO) and public international organizations; private, public, or state institutions of higher education; and for-profit organizations or businesses.  DRL's preference is to work with non-profit entities; however, there may be occasions when a for-profit entity is best suited.

For-profit entities should be aware that its application may be subject to additional review following the panel selection process and that the Department of State generally prohibits profit under its assistance awards to for-profit or commercial organizations.  Profit is defined as any amount in excess of allowable direct and indirect costs.  The allowability of costs incurred by commercial organizations is determined in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) at 48 CFR 30, Cost Accounting Standards Administration, and 48 CFR 31 Contract Cost Principles and Procedures.  Project income earned by the recipient must be deducted from the total project allowable cost in determining the net allowable costs on which the federal share of costs is based.

Providing cost sharing, matching, or cost participation is not an eligibility requirement.

Applicants must have existing, or the capacity to develop, active partnerships with thematic or in-country partners, entities and relevant stakeholders including industry and NGOs and have demonstrable experience in administering successful and preferably similar projects.  DRL encourages applications from foreign-based NGOs headquartered in the geographic regions/countries relevant to the applicable solicitation.  Applicants may form consortia and submit a combined proposal.  However, one organization should be designated as the lead applicant with the other members as sub-award partners.  DRL reserves the right to request additional background information on applicants that do not have previous experience administering federal grant awards, and these applicants may be subject to limited funding on a pilot basis.

DRL is committed to an anti-discrimination policy in all of its projects and activities.  DRL welcomes applications irrespective of an applicant's race, ethnicity, color, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or other status.  DRL welcomes applications from organizations working with the most at risk and vulnerable communities, including women, youths, persons with disabilities, members of ethnic or religious minority groups, and LGBTI persons.

Any applicant listed on the Excluded Parties List System in the **System for Award Management (SAM)** is not eligible to apply for an assistance award in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 CFR 180 that implement Executive Orders 12549 (3 CFR, 1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 CFR, 1989 Comp., p. 235), "Debarment and Suspension."  Additionally, no

entity listed on the Excluded Parties List System in SAM can participate in any activities under an award. All applicants are strongly encouraged to review the Excluded Parties List System in SAM to ensure that no ineligible entity is included.

## Eligibility Requirements

All organizations, whether based in the U.S. or in another country, must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), formerly referred to as DUNS, and an active registration with SAM in order to receive awards from DRL or submit an application through **Grants.gov**. A UEI is one of the data elements mandated by Public Law 109-282, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), for all Federal awards. If you are based in the U.S. or pay employees within the U.S., you will need an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and a Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code. If you are based outside of the U.S. and do not pay employees within the U.S., you do not need an EIN from the IRS. However, you will need a NATO CAGE (NCAGE) code before you can have an active registration in SAM. For further guidance on the registration process, please see the Registration Guide on DRL's website **http://www.state.gov/j/drl/p/c12302.htm**.

SAM requires all entities to renew their registration once a year in order to maintain an active registration status in SAM. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure it has an active registration in SAM and to also maintain its active registration in SAM.

DRL may not make an award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable UEI and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time DRL is ready to make an award, DRL may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

An exemption from this requirement may be permitted on a case-by-case basis if:

1. An applicant is a foreign organization located outside of the U.S., does not currently have a UEI, and the Department determines that acquiring one is impractical given the geographic location; or

2. If the applicant's identity must be protected due to possible endangerment of their mission, their organization's status, their employees, or individuals being served by the applicant.

**Please note:** foreign organizations will be required to register with the NATO Support Agency (NSPA) to receive a NCAGE code in order to register in SAM. NSPA will forward your registration request to the applicable National Codification Bureau (NCB) if your organization is located in a NATO or Tier 2 Sponsored Non-NATO Nation. As of January 2015, NATO nations included Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom, and the United States of America; and Tier 2 nations included Australia, Austria, Brazil, Finland, Israel, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Morocco, New Zealand, Serbia, and Singapore.

NSPA and/or the appropriate NCB forwards all NCAGE code information to all Allied Committee 135 (AC/135) nations, which as of January 2015 also included Afghanistan, Argentina, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, Colombia, Egypt, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Jordan, Montenegro, Oman, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sweden, Thailand, Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, and the United Arab Emirates. **All organizations are strongly advised to take this into consideration when assessing whether registration may result in possible endangerment.**

## Technical Eligibility

Technically eligible applications are those which:

1) Arrive electronically via GrantSolutions.gov or Grants.gov by the designated due date and time noted in the NOFO. If reasonable accommodations is granted for persons with disabilities or for security reasons, applications must still be received by DRL by the designated due date and time noted in the NOFO;

2) Are in English and all costs are in U.S. dollars. If an original document within the application is in another language, an English translation must be provided. For any documents provided in both English and a foreign language, the English language version is the controlling version. (Please note: the Department of State, as indicated in 2 CFR 200.111, requires that English is the official language of all award documents);

3) Heed all instructions contained in the NOFO and PSI, including length and completeness of application; and,

4) Do not violate any of the guidelines stated in the NOFO and the PSI.

It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all of the material submitted in the grant application package is complete, accurate, and current. DRL strongly encourages all applicants, especially foreign or first-time applicants, to submit applications before the designated due date to ensure that the application has been received and is complete.

## Application Requirements

### Format Requirements

For all application documents, please ensure:

1) All pages are numbered, including budgets and attachments;
2) All documents are formatted to 8 ½ x 11 paper; and,
3) All documents are single-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, with 1-inch margins. Captions and footnotes may be 10 point Times New Roman font. Font sizes in charts and tables, including the budget, can be reformatted to fit within 1 page width.

### Required Application Components

Complete applications must include the following:

1. Completed and signed SF-424, SF-424A, and SF424B, as directed on GrantSolutions.gov or Grants.gov; completed and signed SF-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities" (if applicable) (which can be found with the solicitation on GrantSolutions.gov or Grants.gov and on the DRL website at: **http://www.state.gov/j/drl/p/c12302.htm**); and your organization's most recent audit (A-133 audit, if applicable or standard audit).

2. Table of Contents (not to exceed one [1] page in Microsoft Word) that includes a page numbered contents page, including any attachments.

3. Executive Summary (not to exceed two [2] pages in Microsoft Word) that includes:

    a) The target country/countries and thematic area;
    b) Name and contact information for the project's main point of contact;
    c) The total amount of funding requested and project length;
    d) A statement of work or synopsis of the project, including a concise breakdown of the project's objectives, activities, and expected results; and,
    e) A brief statement on how the project is innovative, sustainable, and will have a demonstrated impact.

4. Proposal Narrative (not to exceed ten [10] pages in Microsoft Word). Please note the ten page limit does not include the Table of Contents, Executive Summary, Attachments, Detailed Budget, Budget Narrative, or Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA). Applicants are encouraged to submit multiple documents in a single Microsoft Word or Adobe file, (i.e., Table of Contents, Executive Summary, and Proposal Narrative in one file).

5. Detailed Line-Item Budget (preferably in Microsoft Excel) that includes three [3] columns including the request to DRL, any cost sharing contribution, and total budget (see below for more information on budget format). A summary budget should also be included using the OMB approved budget categories (see SF-424A as a sample). Costs must be in U.S. dollars. Detailed line-item budgets for sub-grantees should be included in additional tabs within the excel workbook.

6. Budget Narrative (preferably in Microsoft Word) that includes substantive explanations and justifications for each line item in the detailed budget spreadsheet, as well as the source and a description of all cost-share offered. For ease of review, DRL recommends applicants order the budget narrative as presented in the detailed budget. Personnel costs should include a clarification of the roles and responsibilities of key staff, base salary, and percentage of time devoted to the project. The budget narrative should provide additional information that might not be readily apparent in the detailed-line item budget, not simply repeat what is represented numerically in the budget, i.e. salaries are for salaries or travel is for travel. Please see below section, **Budget Guidelines**, for more information.

7. Attachments (not to exceed fourteen [14] pages total, preferably in Microsoft Word) that include the following in order:

a) Logic model – Page 1-2:  Please see below section, **Logic Model**, for more information.
b) Risk Assessment – Page 3:  Please see below section, **Risk Analysis**, for more information.
c) Narrative of Monitoring and Evaluation Plan – Pages 4-5: Please see below section, **Narrative of Monitoring and Evaluation Plan**, for more information.
d) Monitoring and Evaluation Performance Indicator Table – Pages 6-9:  Please see below section, **Monitoring and Evaluation Performance Indicator Table**, for more information.  This section can be up to four pages long if necessary.
e) Roles and responsibilities of key project personnel – Page 10:  Please include short bios that highlight relevant professional experience.  This relates to the organization's capacity.  Given the limited space, CVs are not recommended for submission.
f) Timeline of the overall proposal – Page 11:  Components should include activities, evaluation efforts, and program closeout.
g) Additional optional attachments – Page 12-14:  Attachments may include further timeline information, letters of support, memorandums of understanding/agreement, etc.  Letters of support and MOUs must be specific to the project implementation (e.g. from proposed partners or sub-award recipients) and will not count towards the page limit.

8. If your organization has a NICRA and includes NICRA charges in the budget, your latest NICRA should be included as a .pdf file.  This document will not be reviewed by the panelists, but rather used by program and grant staff if the submission is recommended for funding and therefore does not count against the submission page limitations.  If your proposal involves subawards to organizations charging indirect costs, please submit the applicable NICRA also as a .pdf file (see below section, **Budget Guidelines**, for more information on indirect cost rates).  Organizations that do not have a NICRA per 2 CFR 200.414(f) can elect to charge the de minimis rate of 10% of the modified total direct costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.68.  The budget narrative should indicate what costs will be covered using the 10% de minimis rate.

Please note:  DRL retains the right to ask for additional documents not included in this PSI. Additionally, to ensure all applications receive a balanced evaluation, the Department of State Review Panel will review the first page of the requested section up to the page limit and no further.  DRL encourages organizations to use the given space effectively.

Additional information that successful applicants must submit after notification of intent to make a Federal award, but prior to issuance of a Federal award, may include:

1) Written responses and any revised application documents addressing any conditions or recommendations from the DRL Review Panel;
2) Completion of the Department's Financial Management Survey, if receiving DRL funding for the first time;

3) Submission of required documents to register in the Payment Management System managed by the Department of Health and Human Services if receiving DRL funding for the first time, unless an exemption is provided;
4) Other requested information or documents included in the notification of intent to make a Federal award or subsequent communications prior to issuance of a Federal award.

## Guidelines for Application Components

### Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Regulations

Applicants should be aware that if ultimately selected for a Federal award, the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards set forth in 2 CFR 200 (Sub-Chapters A through F) shall apply to all non-Federal entities, except for assistance awards to Individuals and Foreign Public Entities (for more information on these exceptions, see Chapter 5, Federal Assistance to Individuals, and Chapter 6, Federal Assistance to Foreign Public Entities Directive.)  Sub-Chapters A through E shall apply to all foreign organizations, and Sub-Chapters A through D shall apply to all U.S. and foreign for-profit entities.

The applicant/recipient of the award and any sub-recipient under the award must comply with all applicable terms and conditions, in addition to the assurance and certifications made part of the Notice of Award.  The Department's Standard Terms and Conditions can be viewed at **https://www.statebuy.state.gov/fa/Documents/2015DeptTermsAndConditionsForUSandForeignOrg.pdf**.

### SF-424 Forms

Organizations must fill out, sign, and submit SF-424, SF-424A, and SF-424B forms as directed on GrantSolutions.gov or Grants.gov.  Please refer to the following guidelines as you fill out the SF-424:

1. Type of Submission: Application
2. Type of Application: New
3. Date Received: Leave blank. This will automatically be assigned.
4. Applicant Identifier: Leave blank
5a. Federal Entity Identifier: Leave blank
5b. Federal Award Identifier: Leave blank
6. Date Received by State: Leave blank. This will automatically be assigned
7. State Application Identified: Leave blank. This will automatically be assigned
8a. Enter the legal name of the applicant organization. Do NOT list abbreviations or acronyms unless they are part of the organization's legal name.
8b. Employer/Taxpayer ID Number: Non-U.S. organizations enter 44-4444444 (no dash)
8c. Enter organizational UEI number (Unique Entity Identifier).
8d. Enter the address of the applicant
8e. Enter the name of the primary organizational unit (and department or division, if applicable) that will undertake the assistance activity, if applicable
8f. Enter the name, title, and all contact information of the person to be contacted on matters involving this application

9. Select an applicant type (type of organization)
10. Enter: Department of State
11. The CFDA number is normally 19.345.  However, please see the NOFO if another CFDA number should be used instead.
12. Enter the Funding Opportunity Number and title.  This number will already be entered on electronic applications.
13. Enter the Competition Identification Number and title.  This number will already be entered on electronic applications.
14. Areas Affected by Project: List the country or countries where project activities will take place in alphabetical order; for projects that will take place in more than one region enter "Global"
15. Enter the title of your proposed project (if necessary, delete pre-printed wording)
16. Congressional districts of Applicant and Program: If based in the U.S. please enter congressional district; if unknown or a foreign applicant, please enter "90"
16b. For congressional district of program, please enter "90"
17. Please refer to the NOFO for the estimated start date and enter your projected end date
18a. Enter the amount requested for the project described in the proposal under "Federal"
18b. Enter any cost-share under "Applicant". Otherwise, use zeros.
19. Enter "c"
20. Select the appropriate box.  If you answer "yes" to this question you will be required to provide an explanation.
21. Enter the name, title, and all contact information of the individual authorized to sign for the application on behalf of the applicant organization.

**SF-424A – Please review the detailed instructions below BEFORE completing this form online.  Please note: the person who signs the 424A must have legal authority to do so on behalf of the organization.**

*Section A - Budget Summary - Complete Row 1*
1a. Enter: DRL Program (This is the only grant program that needs to be entered)
1b. Enter: N/A
1c-d. Leave these fields blank
1e. Enter the amount of federal funds you are requesting for this project
1f. Enter the amount of any other funds you will receive towards this project
1g. Enter the total cost of this project

**Rows 2, 3, and 4 should be left blank.**

*Section B - Budget Categories – Enter total project costs in each category in Column 1 as described below.  In Column 5, the form should automatically show the sum.  Columns 2, 3, and 4 should be left blank.*
6a-h. Enter the amount for each object class category (Include cost share).
6i. Enter the sum of 6a-6h
6j. Enter any indirect charges
6k. Enter the sum of 6i and 6j

7. Enter any program income that will be earned as a result of the project. If there is none leave this section blank.

*Section C - Non-Federal Resources (Only complete this section if your project includes an applicant cost share or funds from other sources-cost share is not required)*
8a. Under Grant Program enter: DRL Program
8b. Enter your cost share amount
8c. Enter the amount of any other funding sources for this project
8d. Leave blank
8e. Enter the total amount for all non-federal resources (the form should automatically show this sum)
**Rows 9, 10, and 11 should be left blank.**

*Section D - Forecasted Cash Needs*
13. In the first column enter the amount of federal funds you expect to expend in the project's first year. Forecasted cash needs by quarter are not required.
14. In the first column enter the amount of non-federal funds you expect to expend in the project's first year. Forecasted cash needs by quarter are not required.
15. In the first column enter the sum of 13 and 14 (the form should automatically show this sum). Forecasted cash needs by quarter are not required.

*Section E - Budget Estimates of Federal Funds Needed for Balance of the Project*
16a. Under Grant Program enter: DRL Program
16b. Enter the amount of federal funds you expect to expend in year two of the project.
16c. Enter the amount of federal funds you expect to expend in year three of the project.
16d. and 16e. Leave blank
**Rows 17, 18, 19 should be left blank.**
20. Enter the total amount for each year (The form should automatically show this sum.)

*Section F - Other Budget Information*
21. Enter: Direct Charges – Leave Blank
22. Enter: Indirect Charges – If Indirect Charges are shown in Section B 6, enter the type of Indirect Rate used (Provisional, Predetermined, Final, or Fixed)
23. Enter any comments

**SF-424B** – Please fill in the highlighted fields: Page 2 - Complete applicant organization and title of authorized official sections. The Authorized Official is generally the grant signatory at the organization or business.

## Logic Model
A logic model is a useful tool to help one "map" a project and keep track of activities (outputs) and results (outcomes) by specifying strategic objectives, identifying what resources are needed, outlining proposed activities and beneficiaries, and illustrating its relationship to the proposed results.

| Problem Statement |
|---|
| *What problems or issues does the project attempt to solve or address? What is needed by the target population and what strategies will lead to positive change? What are the underlying beliefs and assumptions that will guide the project to produce change?* |

**Project Objective 1: [State the project objective here and divide the logic model by each objective. Objectives are concrete and viewed as targets under the overall projectgoal.]**

| Needs | Inputs | Activities | Outputs | Short and Intermediate Outcomes | Impact (e.g., Long-term Outcomes) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *What are the needs of the community, based on the social, political and economic condition of the country or region?* | *What human and financial resources will be used for this project?*<br><br>*[Staff, Time, Money, Materials, Equipment, Partners]* | *What activities will be conducted to meet the needs or address the issues of the community?*<br><br>*[Conduct workshops, meetings; Deliver services; Provide training; Facilitate; Partnership]*<br><br>*List activities and match numbering from M&E plan (e.g. Activity 1.1, Activity 1b).* | *What will be produced or delivered or who will participate in activities?*<br><br>*[Products created or resources developed; Serviced delivered; Participants (e.g. NGOs, local citizens, media, host country government officials) reached]*<br><br>*Measured with performance indicators* | *What changes will happen after an activity has been implemented?*<br><br>*[Increased awareness, knowledge, or attitudes; Improved skills; Change in behavior, practice, or decision making; Policy change]*<br><br>*Measured with performance indicators* | *What long-term changes will occur in the social, cultural political or economic context?* |

**Project Objective 2: [Add rows as necessary to report on all project objectives.]**

| Needs | Inputs | Activities | Outputs | Outcomes | Impact |
|-------|--------|------------|---------|----------|--------|
|       |        |            |         |          |        |

| Assumptions | External Factors |
|-------------|------------------|
| *What factors need to occur or which stakeholders or grantees need to be involved for the project to be successful? How and why will proposed activities lead to proposed outputs, and outputs lead to outcomes?* <br><br> *[Country's political and economic condition; Skills and knowledge level of intended beneficiary; Implementer's organizational capacity; Level of engagement by stakeholders]* | *What factors that are not in the control of the project—e.g. changes in government policies or the political situation—could affect expected activities, outputs and outcomes?* <br><br> *[Change in government policies, such as NGO restrictions; Change in political situation, such as a coup or civil unrest; Involvement from other donors and implementers]* |

The components of a basic logic model include:

- **Needs**: The community need or problem as identified by the organization.
- **Inputs**: Human and financial resources used for the project implementation.
- **Activities**: Actions taken or work performed through which inputs are mobilized to produce outputs.
- **Pathways**: Linkages that specify how activities of a project lead to the expected outputs, outcomes, and impact of a project through each step of the logic model.
- **Expected Outputs**: Direct and measurable results expected from project activities. They should be tangible, visible and measurable products of project work. If they are sustainable beyond the activity, they may turn into project outcomes.
- **Expected Outcomes**: The short-term and medium-term effects of a project's outputs. Outcomes should reflect the results of project's activities and their near-term effects on project objectives.
- **Expected Impact**: The long-term outcomes of a project, which is linked closely to the overall project goal(s). Such an objective goal could be as ambitious as reducing human rights violations in an authoritarian society, or it could be less ambitious, though equally important, such as adding greater female representation to a country's political parties.
- **Assumptions**: Hypotheses about factors or risks which could affect the progress or success of the project. This includes our underlying beliefs about the project, the stakeholders, or beneficiaries.
- **External Factors**: Factors which are not explicitly in the control of the project but which can have an important effect on the intended outcomes and impact, such as government policies or changes in the political situation in the country.

While the logic model is represented in a linear trajectory, the relationship between factors may not always be unidirectional.  Sometimes factors can mutually affect each other.  Thus, the logic model should be viewed as a dynamic and evolving process, which should be re-evaluated and adjusted when conditions change.  More information about the logic model, including a sample model and template, which can be found at **http://www.state.gov/j/drl/p/c12302.htm**.

## Risk Analysis

Risks are unavoidable – all projects inherently contain both internal and external risks.  However, with proper identification and management, risks can be prepared for, minimized or mitigated.  The purpose of a risk analysis is to identify the internal and external risks associated with the proposed project in the application, rate the likelihood of the risks, rate the potential impact of the risks on the project, and identify actions that could help mitigate the risks.  A risk analysis should not be considered a one-time exercise or a static document.  DRL defers to organizations to conduct adequate risk analysis and remediation for all of its operations and advises that risk analysis and remediation occur throughout the life of a project and should result in revisions to risk analysis documents and processes as necessary.  A suggested format for a risk analysis document is below.  Applicants should include all assumptions and external factors identified in the logic model in the risk analysis.  Applicants should rate the likelihood of a risk and potential impact of the risk as "High," "Medium," or "Low."  Additional lines can be included in the risk analysis table as necessary.

|  | Description of Risk | Likelihood of Risk | Potential Impact of Risk | Risk Mitigation Plan/Actions |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Risks affecting realization of Project Objectives |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Risks affecting realization of Project Outcomes/Outputs |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Risks affecting Organization |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Risks affecting Safety and Security of Personnel |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

## Narrative of Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

A monitoring and evaluation plan (M&E plan) is a systematic and objective approach or process for determining project performance toward its objectives over time. Ideally, an M&E plan is well-integrated into the design and implementation of a project.

The M&E plan must include a detailed narrative explaining how the monitoring and evaluation will be carried out and by whom. Applicants should include the monitoring and evaluation process in their timeline. The narrative should include an explanation for each of the following components:

**Overview and Methodology:** Explain the M&E approach for this project, specifically how applicants will be monitoring, evaluating, and reporting on the progress of project objectives and activities. Provide a clear description of the methodology and data collection strategies and tools to be employed (e.g., pre- and post-test surveys, interviews, focus groups). The description should include how the applicant will track participants or partners as appropriate and be able to respond to key monitoring and evaluation questions, including information learned as a result of the project, changes in attitude, behavior, or skills as a result of the project, and the effects of the project on institutions or organizations where participants work. Also describe what quality controls are in place to ensure the validity and reliability of data being collected. Finally, detail how the data will be analyzed and used throughout the life of the project.

**Roles and Responsibility:** Detail who will oversee and participate in M&E efforts, from data collection to reporting. If the project includes work with local partners or sub-partners, explain how M&E efforts will be coordinated amongst the organizations.

**Data Security:** Given the sensitivity of DRL grants, describe the protocols in place to ensure the security of information being collected, including who has access to the information, both on- and offline.

**External Evaluation:** Explain if an external evaluation (mid-term and/or final) will be included in the project or how the project will be systematically assessed in absence of one. Evaluations are systematic studies that use research methods to address specific questions about project performance that can provide a valuable supplement to ongoing monitoring activities. Projects that are at least 24 months or more than $500,000 are strongly encouraged to include an external mid-term and/or final evaluation.

**Consideration of Marginalized Populations:** Given DRL's commitment to supporting marginalized population, applicants should explain how information about marginalized population will be collected. At a minimum, data should be disaggregated by relevant social categories (e.g., sex, disability status, sexual orientation, or ethnic or religious minority status). The applicant should also include separate indicators that specifically measure project outcomes on marginalized populations.

## Monitoring and Evaluation Performance Indicator Table

The M&E plan must also include a table with output- and outcome-based performance indicators, including the baselines and quarterly targets for each indicator; type of data disaggregation for the indicator, if applicable (disaggregation by sex, disability status, ethnic or religious minority status, or sexual orientation is required where applicable and appropriate); monitoring and evaluation data collection tools; data source; and frequency of monitoring and evaluation. Successful monitoring and evaluation depend on the following:

- Setting strategic objectives that are clear, specific, measurable, attainable, results-focused, and placed in a reasonable time frame;
- Linking project activities to stated strategic objectives as detailed in the logic model; and,
- Developing key performance indicators that include baselines and targets and measure realistic progress towards all strategic objectives and project activities as well as demonstrate sustainable impact beyond the life of the grant.

Strong monitoring and evaluation plans incorporate performance indicators for *all* project objectives and activities and include baselines and targets for each indicator. Performance indicators are ways to objectively observe project progress and measure the degree of success a project's planned activities have had in achieving the stated objectives. Performance indicators should address the direct products and services delivered by a project (defined as outputs), and the results of those products and services (defined as outcomes). Performance indicators should be clearly defined (i.e., explained how the indicators will be measured and reported) and in most cases quantifiable. Qualitative indicators, though more rare than quantitative indicators, are acceptable if they provide a reliable means to measure a particular phenomenon or attribute. A good guide for determining performance measures is the acronym SMART (Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely).

The Office of the Director of Foreign Assistance (F) requires all DRL grantees to report on standard indicators at the appropriate F Framework Governing Justly and Democratically (GJD) Element level. Therefore, applicants should review the F Framework GJD Indicators and include at least one of these indicators that is relevant to the proposal in the M&E plan. Information on and the list of standard indicators is provided at **http://www.state.gov/f/indicators/**. Please denote these indicators in the M&E plan with an asterisk.

Outputs, which are products and services delivered from the project activities, are often stated as an amount. Output data show the scope or size of project activities, but they cannot replace information about progress towards the project's outcomes or impact. Examples of project outputs include: 100 civil society organization members trained in organizational fundraising and 60 radio programs produced.

Outcomes, in contrast, represent the specific, realistic results of a project and are often measured as an extent of change. Outcomes may include progress toward expected project objectives or other results of the project. For example, a project's objective could be to increase the participation of female candidates in elections. One outcome of the project would be that after

receiving training on effective engagement in the political process, 40% of the female participants ran for a seat on the Parliament.

Applicants should also track and disaggregate data of participants by sex, where applicable, and include indicators that capture gender sensitivity. Similarly, projects that address issues affecting other traditionally marginalized populations, such as persons with disabilities, LGBTI persons, and ethnic and religious minorities, should track and disaggregate data of participants by those target populations, where applicable and appropriate. Applicants should include indicators that measure support for issues affecting marginalized populations.

For a more detailed explanation of DRL's expectations for the M&E plan, please review the DRL Monitoring and Evaluation Primer and sample Monitoring and Evaluation plan, found at **http://www.state.gov/j/drl/p/c12302.htm**.

## Budget Guidelines

Applications will not be considered complete unless they include budgets that respond to the solicitation guidelines. Complete budgets will provide a detailed line-item budget outlining specific cost requirements for proposed activities as well as a summary budget and budget narrative. A minimum of three columns should be used to delineate the bureau funding request, cost-share by applicant, and total project funding. Complete applications will include a budget narrative to clarify and justify individual line-items (i.e., calculations of how the costs were derived per month or year, their necessity, and overall contribution to the project's cost-effectiveness).

Please note: Grantees under DRL-funded projects are responsible for complying with all applicable tax treaties and federal, state, and local laws on tax withholding and reporting for project participants.

The three-column proposal line item budget should include the following components, in the suggested format below:

**1.** Summary Budget

**2.** Line-Item Budget

This budget is designed to serve as an example of the format for complete budget submissions and is NOT exhaustive. Individual line items included in each applicant's budget should reflect specific project activities.

**Before grants are awarded, DRL reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of DRL and availability of funds.**

## Summary Budget

Please include the applicant organization name, title and duration of the project, and the following:

All organizations, including those not offering any cost-sharing, should submit a budget, formatted to include three columns for each line item: DRL funding request, cost-share offered, and total funding.  Sources of all cost-share offered in the application should be identified and explained in the budget narrative.  When organizations have made a reasonable, good-faith effort to obtain cost sharing or are pursuing avenues to cost share, DRL encourages applicants to note this in the proposal.

Budgets should be arranged according to the example format below to clearly delineate cost-share:

Summary Budget

|  | **DRL Request** | **Cost Share** | **Total** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **A. Personnel** | | | |
| **B. Fringe Benefits** | | | |
| **C. Travel** | | | |
| **D. Equipment** | | | |
| **E. Supplies** | | | |
| **F. Contractual** | | | |
| **G. Construction** | N/A | | |
| **H. Other Direct Costs** | | | |
| **I. Total Direct Charges (sum A-H)** | | | |
| **J. Indirect Charges** | | | |
| **K. Total (sum I-J)** | | | |

## Line-item Budget

| | | Unit Cost | | | | Requested Federal Funds | Cost-Share by Applicant | Project Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Unit | Number | Amount | Rate | | | |
| **A** | **Personnel** | months or years | | salary (month or year) | % effort | | | |
| A.1 | *US-Based personnel* | | | | | | | |
| A.1.1 | Project Manager | | | | | | | |
| A.1.2 | Project Officer, etc. | | | | | | | |
| A.2 | *Field Personnel* | | | | | | | |
| A.2.1 | ie , etc. | | | | | | | |
| A.2.2 | ie , etc. | | | | | | | |
| Subtotal Personnel | | | | | | | | |
| **B** | **Fringe Benefits** | | | | | | | |
| B.1 | US-Based Personnel Fringe Benefits | | | | | | | |
| B.2 | Field Personnel Fringe Benefits | | | | | | | |
| Subtotal Fringe Benefits | | | | | | | | |
| **C** | **Travel** | # people | # days | Cost | | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| C.1 | **International** airfare (from…to /RT) | | | | | | |
| C.1.1 | Per diem (**Country/City**) | | | | | | |
| C.2 | *Domestic Travel* | | | | | | |
| C.2.1 | *Airfare/ground transportation (specify)* | | | | | | |
| C.2.2 | Per diem, specify city/country | | | | | | |
| C.3 | *Other Travel Costs* (eg Baggage allowance, visas, immunizations, etc.) | | | | | | |
| Subtotal Travel | | | | | | | |
| **D** | **Equipment** (> $5,000 per unit ) | # units | unit cost | | | | |
| D.1 | (description, ie generators) | | | | | | |
| D.2 | (description) | | | | | | |
| Subtotal Equipment | | | | | | | |
| **E** | **Supplies** (< $5,000 per unit) | # units | unit cost | | | | |
| E.1 | (description) | | | | | | |
| Subtotal Supplies | | | | | | | |
| **F** | **Contractual** (**Consultant fees**) | | | | | | |
| F.1 | *Contractual Sub grantee (NAME) – a separate excel tab can be used to show sub-award budgets* | | | | | | |
| F.1.1 | Personnel | | | | | | |
| F.1.2 | Travel (if applicable) | # people | # days | Cost | | | |
| F.1.2.1 | Airfare (from/to, /RT) | | | | | | |
| F.1.2.2 | Per diem (Country/City) | | | | | | |
| Subtotal sub grantee *(NAME)* | | | | | | | |
| Subtotal Contractual | | | | | | | |
| **G** | **Construction** | | | | | | |
| G.1 | (description) | | | | | | |
| **H** | **Other Direct Costs** | | | | | | |
| H.1 | Communication – line item breakdown for each communication category such as postage, telephone calls, faxes, etc. | | | | | | |
| H.2 | Room Rental | | | | | | |
| H.3 | Interpreters | | | | | | |
| H.4 | Audit Costs | | | | | | |
| H.5 | Additional lines for other itemized costs as needed | | | | | | |
| **I** | **Total Direct Costs** | | | | | | |
| **J** | **Indirect Costs** (NICRA %, Final, Pre-determined, Provisional, and Basis or 10% de minimus based on modified direct costs) | | | | | | |

| к | **Total Project Cost** | (must match award amount) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

**A. Personnel** – In general, employees receiving benefits from the applicant organization are considered staff.  Consultants hired to assist with the project who do not receive benefits should be included under Contractual.  Identify staffing requirements by each position title and brief description of duties.  Each staff member's salary calculation should include the annual/base salary of each position, percentage of time and number of months devoted to the project. (e.g., Administrative Director: $30,000/year x 25% x 8.5 months; calculation: $30,000/12 = $2,500 x 25% x 8.5 months = $5,312.). This can be in the budget narrative if the organization prefers.

**B. Fringe Benefits** - State benefit costs separately from salary costs and explain how benefits are computed for each category of employee (specify type and rate).

**C. Travel** - Staff and any participant travel:

1) International airfare

2) In-country travel overseas

3) Domestic travel in the United States, if any

4) Per diem/maintenance: includes lodging, meals and incidentals for both participant and staff travel.  Rates of maximum allowances for U.S. and foreign travel are available from the following website: **http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/21287** and **https://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=184&menu_id=78**.  Per diem rates may not exceed the published U.S. government allowance rates; however, institutions may use per diem rates lower than official government rates.

Please explain differences in fares among travelers on the same routes (e.g., project staff member traveling for three weeks whose fare is higher than that of staff member traveling for four months).  Please note that all travel, where applicable, must be in compliance with the Fly America Act.  For more information see **http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/103191**.

**D. Equipment** – Equipment is defined as having a per unit cost of $5,000 and a service life of more than one year.  If the item meets these criteria than all federal procurement policies and procedures must be followed.  If an item does not meet these criteria it is considered a supply.  Please provide justification for any equipment purchase/rental.

**E. Supplies** - List items separately using unit costs (and the percentage of each unit cost being charged to the grant) for photocopying, postage, telephone/fax, printing, and office supplies (for example, Telephone: $50/month x 50% = $25/month x 12 months).

**F. Contractual** –

**a) Subgrants** – For each subgrant/contract please provide a detailed line item breakdown explaining specific services.  In the subgrant budgets, provide the same level of detail for personnel, travel, supplies, equipment, direct costs, and fringe benefits required of the direct applicant.  If indirect is charged on a subgrant please include a NICRA.  Please note that a subgrantee who receives equal to or more than $25,000 is required to have a UEI number.  Please visit **www.fsrs.gov** for more information.

Subgrants of up to $150,000 may be provided as a fixed amount award with prior written approval from the Department's warranted grants officer, per 2 CFR 200.332.  Any changes in principal investigator, project leader, project partner, or scope of effort must also receive the prior written approval from the Department's warranted grants officer, per 2 CFR 200.201.  Per 2 CFR 200.201, fixed amount awards may be used if the project scope is specific and if adequate cost, historical, or unit pricing data is available to establish a fixed amount award based on a reasonable estimate of actual cost.  Payments are based on meeting specific requirements of the award.  Accountability is based on performance and results.  At the completion of the fixed amount award, the organization must certify in writing that the project or activity was completed or the level of effort was expended.  If the required level of activity or effort was not carried out, the amount of the fixed amount award must be adjusted.

Please Note:  it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that proposed sub-awardees are eligible for U.S. government funding.

**b) Consultant Fees** – For example lecture fees, honoraria, travel, and per diem for outside speakers or external evaluators: list number of people and rates per day (for example, 2 x $150/day x 2 days).

Please note: organizations must adhere to its own documented procurement procedures, which must reflect applicable U.S. State, local, and tribal laws and regulations, provided that the procurements conform to applicable U.S. Federal law and the standards identified in 2 CFR 200.318 through 2 CFR 200.326.

**G. Construction** – Due to the nature of DRL projects, construction costs are generally not allowable or applicable.

**H. Other Direct Costs** – these will vary depending on the nature of the project.  The inclusion of each should be justified in the budget narrative.  Single audit or 2 CFR 200 Subpart F audit costs can be included if they are not part of the indirect pool and only the portion of the cost associated with this project.

**J. Indirect Charges** – An organization with a NICRA should include a copy of the cost-rate agreement.  Applicants should indicate in the proposal budget how the rate is applied (eg to direct administrative expenses, to all direct costs, to wages and salaries only, etc.) and if any of the rate will be cost-shared.  DRL generally does not pay indirect costs against participant expenses, but each case may vary.  Organizations claiming indirect costs should have an

established NICRA.  If subgrantees are claiming indirect costs, they should have an established NICRA that is also submitted with the proposal package.

Per 2 CFR 200.414, any non-Federal entity that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate, except for those non-Federal entities described in Appendix VII to Part 200—States and Local Government and Indian Tribe Indirect Cost Proposals, paragraph D.1.b, may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC) which may be used indefinitely.  Per 2 CFR 200.68, MTDC means all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and up to the first $25,000 of each subaward (regardless of the period of performance of the subawards under the award).  MTDC excludes equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs and the portion of each subaward in excess of $25,000.  Other items may only be excluded when necessary to avoid a serious inequity in the distribution of indirect costs, and with the approval of the cognizant agency for indirect costs.  The budget narrative should include what costs will be covered if using the 10% de minimis indirect rate.

As described in 2 CFR 200.403, factors affecting allowability of costs, costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both.  If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a non-Federal entity chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time.

**Cost Share -** Cost-sharing is the portion of project cost not borne by the Federal Government.  DRL encourages but does not require cost-sharing, which may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs and offered by the applicant and/or in-country partners.  Applicants should consider all types of cost-sharing, including in-kind and public-private partnerships.  Examples include the use of office space owned by other entities; donated or borrowed supplies and equipment; (non-federal) sponsored travel costs; waived indirect costs; and project activities, translations, or consultations conducted by qualified volunteers.  The values of offered cost-share should be reported in accordance with (the applicable cost principles outlined in) 2 CFR 200.306.  *Other federal funding does not constitute cost-sharing.*

Explanation of contributions should be included, whether cash or in-kind.  Assign a monetary value in U.S. dollars to each in-kind contribution.  If the proposed project is a component of a larger project, identify other funding sources for the proposal and indicate the specific funding amount to be provided by those sources.  In addition, it is recommended that the budget narrative address the overall cost-effectiveness of the proposal, including leveraging of institutional or other resources.

Please note:  DRL projects do not require cost share, but if it is included then the recipient must maintain written records to support all allowable costs that are claimed as its contribution to cost-share, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government.  Such records are subject to audit.  In the event the recipient does not meet the minimum amount of cost-sharing as stipulated in the recipient's budget, DRL's contribution may be reduced in proportion to the recipient's contribution.

**Other Budget Guidelines**
DRL will consider budgeted line-items for the following:

- External evaluations to assess the project's impact (costs must be built into the overall original budget proposal and must be reasonable);
- Costs associated with an internal evaluation conducted by the grantee (costs must be built into the overall original budget proposal and must be reasonable);
- Visa fees and immunizations associated with project travel; and,
- Other justified reasonable costs necessary for achievement of project objectives as allowable by 2 CFR 200.

DRL does not pay for the following, under any circumstances:

- Incurred before or after the specified dates of the grant (unless prior approval received);
- Projects designed to advocate policy views or positions of foreign governments or views of a particular political faction;
- Alcoholic beverages; and,
- Costs of entertainment, including amusement, diversion, and social activities and any associated costs are unallowable, except where specific costs that might otherwise be considered entertainment have a programmatic purpose and are authorized either in the approved budget for the Federal award or with prior written approval of the warranted Grants Officer.

**Audits**
The recipient's proposal should include the cost of an audit that:

1) Complies with the requirements of 2 CFR 200 Subpart F "Audit Requirements;"

2) Complies with the requirements of American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) Statement of Position (SOP) No. 92-9, "Audits of Not-for-Profit Organizations Receiving Federal Awards;"

3) Complies with AICPA Codification of Statements on Auditing Standards AU Section 551, "Reporting on Information Accompanying the Basic Financial Statements in Auditor-Submitted Documents," where applicable. When the U.S. Department of State is the largest direct source of Federal financial assistance (i.e., the cognizant Federal Agency) and indirect costs are charged to Federal grants, a supplemental schedule of indirect cost computation is required;

4) A non-Federal entity that expends $750,000 or more during the non-Federal entity's fiscal year in Federal awards must have a single or program-specific audit conducted for that year in accordance with the provisions of 2 CFR 200 subpart F.

*The audit costs shall be identified by 2 CFR 200.425.*

## Proposal Submission Instructions

The U.S. Department of State requires proposals be submitted electronically via **www.grantsolutions.gov** or **www.grants.gov** . Both systems require registration by the applying organization. *Please note: the Grants.gov registration process can take 10 business days or longer, even if all registration steps are completed in a timely manner.*

**It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that it has an active registration in GrantSolutions.gov or Grants.gov and that an application has been received by GrantSolutions.gov or Grants.gov in its entirety. DRL bears no responsibility for applicants not being registered before the due date or for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.**

**GrantSolutions.gov is highly recommended for submission of all applications and is DRL's preferred choice for receiving applications.**

Faxed, couriered, or emailed documents will generally not be accepted. Reasonable accommodations may, in appropriate circumstances, be provided to applicants with disabilities or for security reasons. Applicants must follow all formatting instructions in the applicable NOFO and these instructions.

## GrantSolutions.gov Applications

All applicants are strongly encouraged to submit applications via **www.grantsolutions.gov**.

Applicants using GrantSolutions.gov for the first time should complete their "New Organization Registration" as soon as possible. This process must be completed before an application can be submitted. Registration with GrantSolutions.gov usually occurs directly after an applicant submits their registration. To register with GrantSolutions.gov, click "Login to GrantSolutions" and follow the "First Time Users" link to the "New Organization Registration Page." There are different ways to register your organization, click on the link that fits best.

Upon completion of a successful electronic application submission, the GrantSolutions system will provide the applicant with a confirmation page indicating the date and time (Eastern Time) of the electronic application submission as well as an official Application Number. This confirmation page will also provide a listing of all items that constitute the final application submission. Please save this page for your records.

Late applications are neither reviewed nor considered unless the DRL point of contact listed in the NOFO is contacted prior to the deadline and is provided with evidence of system errors caused by GrantSolutions.gov that is outside of the applicants' control and is the sole reason for a late submission.

Applicants should not expect a separate notification from DRL upon receiving their application.

GrantSolutions.gov Help Desk:
For assistance with GrantSolutions.gov accounts and technical issues related to the system,

please contact Customer Support at **help@grantsolutions.gov** or call 1-866-577-0771 (toll charges for international callers) or 1-202-401-5282. Customer Support is available 8 AM – 6 PM EST, Monday – Friday, except federal holidays.

## Grants.gov Applications
Applicants who do not submit applications via GrantSolutions.gov may submit via **www.grants.gov**. It is DRL's preference that applications be submitted through GrantSolutions.gov.

Please be advised that completing all the necessary registration steps for obtaining a username and password from Grants.gov **can take more than two weeks.**

Please refer to the Grants.gov website for definitions of various "application statuses" and the difference between a submission receipt and a submission validation. Applicants will receive a validation e-mail from Grants.gov upon the successful submission of an application. Validation of an electronic submission via Grants.gov can take up to two business days.

Late applications are neither reviewed nor considered unless the DRL point of contact listed in the NOFO is contacted prior to the deadline and is provided with evidence of system errors caused by GrantSolutions.gov that is outside of the applicants' control and is the sole reason for a late submission.

Applicants should not expect a separate notification from DRL upon receiving their application.

Grants.gov Helpdesk:
For assistance with Grants.gov, please call the Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726 or email **support@grants.gov**. The Contact Center is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, except federal holidays.

## Proposal Review Process
DRL strives to ensure each application receives a balanced evaluation by a DRL Review Panel. The Department's Office of Acquisitions Management (AQM) will determine technical eligibility for all applications. All technically eligible applications for a given solicitation are then reviewed against the same seven criteria, which includes quality of project idea, project planning/ability to achieve objectives, institution's record and capacity, inclusive programming, cost effectiveness, multiplier effect/sustainability, and project monitoring and evaluation.

Additionally, the Panel will evaluate how the application meets the solicitation request, U.S. foreign policy goals, and the priority needs of DRL overall. DRL may also take into consideration the balance of the current portfolio of active projects, including if there is a need for geographic or thematic diversity.

In most cases, the DRL Review Panel includes representatives from DRL, the appropriate Department of State regional bureau (which includes feedback from US embassies), as well as U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) (which includes feedback from USAID missions). In some cases, additional panelists may participate, including from other Department

of State bureaus or offices, U.S. government departments, agencies, or boards, representatives from partner governments, or representatives from entities that are in a public-private partnership with DRL. At the end of discussion on an application, the Panel votes on recommending the application for approval by the DRL Assistant Secretary. If more applications are ultimately recommended for approval than DRL has funding available for, the Panel will rank the recommended applications in priority order for consideration by the DRL Assistant Secretary. The Grants Officer Representative (GOR) for the eventual award does not vote on the panel. All Panelists must sign non-disclosure agreements and conflicts of interest agreements.

DRL Review Panels may provide conditions and recommendations on applications to enhance the proposed project, which must be addressed by the applicant before further consideration of the award. To ensure effective use of DRL funds, conditions or recommendations may include requests to increase, decrease, clarify, and/or justify costs and project activities.

With the exception of technical submission questions, during the solicitation period U.S. Department of State staff in Washington and overseas shall not discuss competing applications with applicants until the review process has been completed and rejection and approval letters have been transmitted.

For further information on the DRL grants process, please see the DRL website: **http://www.state.gov/j/drl/p/index.htm**

## Proposal Review Criteria
Applications should address the seven specific criteria outlined in the NOFO described below. Panelists will judge each application individually against the following criteria, listed below in order of importance, and not against competing applications.

### Quality of Project Idea
Applications should be responsive to the solicitation, appropriate in the country/regional context, and should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to DRL's mission of promoting human rights and democracy. DRL prioritizes innovative and creative approaches rather than projects that simply duplicate or add to efforts by other entities. This does not exclude projects that clearly build off existing successful projects in a new and innovative way from consideration. In countries where similar activities are already taking place, an explanation should be provided as to how new activities will not duplicate or merely add to existing activities and how these efforts will be coordinated.

### Project Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives
A strong application will include a clear articulation of how the proposed project activities contribute to the overall project objectives, and each activity will be clearly developed and detailed. A comprehensive monthly work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and the logistical capacity of the organization. Objectives should be ambitious, yet measurable results-focused and achievable in a reasonable time frame. A complete application must include a logic model to demonstrate how the project will have an impact on its proposed objectives. Applications should address how the project will engage relevant stakeholders and should identify local partners as appropriate. If local partners have been identified, DRL strongly

encourages applicants to submit letters of support from proposed in-country partners. Additionally, applicants should describe the division of labor among the direct applicant and any local partners. If applicable, applications should identify target areas for activities, target participant groups or selection criteria for participants, and the specific roles of subawardees, among other pertinent details. In particularly challenging operating environments, applications should include contingency plans for overcoming potential difficulties in executing the original work plan and address any operational or programmatic security concerns and how they will be addressed.

## Institution's Record and Capacity

DRL will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants. Applications should demonstrate an institutional record of successful democracy and human rights programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past grants. Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the project's objectives.

## Inclusive Programing

DRL strives to ensure its projects advance the rights and uphold the dignity of the most at risk and vulnerable populations, including women, youth, people with disabilities, members of racial and ethnic or religious minority groups, and LGBTI persons. To the extent possible, applicants should identify and address considerations to support these populations in all proposed project activities and objectives, and should provide specific means, measures, and corresponding targets to include them as appropriate. Applicants should provide strong justifications if unable to incorporate the most at risk and vulnerable populations within proposed project activities and objectives. Applications that do not include this will not be considered highly competitive in this category.

## Cost Effectiveness

DRL strongly encourages applicants to clearly demonstrate project cost-effectiveness in their application, including examples of leveraging institutional and other resources. However, cost-sharing or other examples of leveraging other resources is not required and does not need to be included in the budget. Inclusion in the budget does not result in additional points awarded during the review process. Budgets however should have low and/or reasonable overhead and administration costs and applicants should provide clear explanations and justifications for these costs in relation to the work involved. All budget items should be clearly explained and justified to demonstrate its necessity, appropriateness, and its link to the project objectives.

Please note: if cost-share is included in the budget then the recipient must maintain written records to support all allowable costs that are claimed as its contribution to cost-share, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit. In the event the recipient does not meet the minimum amount of cost-sharing as stipulated in the recipient's budget, DRL's contribution may be reduced in proportion to the recipient's contribution.

## Multiplier Effect/Sustainability

Applications should clearly delineate how elements of the project will have a multiplier effect and be sustainable beyond the life of the grant. A good multiplier effect will have an impact beyond the direct beneficiaries of the grant (e.g. participants trained under a grant go on to train

other people, workshop participants use skills from a workshop to enhance a national level election that affects the entire populace).  A strong sustainability plan may include demonstrating continuing impact beyond the life of a project or garnering other donor support after DRL funding ceases.

## Project Monitoring and Evaluation

Complete applications will include a detailed plan (both a narrative and table) of how the project's progress and impact will be monitored and evaluated throughout the project. Incorporating a well-designed monitoring and evaluation component into a project is one of the most efficient methods of documenting the progress and results (intended and unintended) of a project.  Applications should demonstrate the capacity to provide objectives with measurable outputs and outcomes and engage in robust monitoring and assessment of project activities.

The quality of the M&E plan will be judged on the narrative explaining how both monitoring and evaluation will be carried out, who will be responsible for those related activities.  Projects that are at least 24 months or more than $500,000 are strongly encouraged to include an external mid-term and/or final evaluation.  Explain how an external evaluation (mid-term and/or final) will be incorporated into the project implementation plan or how the project will be systematically assessed in absence of one.  See the section on **Narrative of Monitoring and Evaluation Plan** on what is required in the narrative.

The M&E plan will also be rated on the M&E performance indicator table. The output and outcome-based performance indicators should not only be separated by project objectives but also should match the objectives, outcomes, and outputs detailed in the logic model. Performance indicators should be clearly defined (i.e., explained how the indicators will be measured and reported) either within the table or with a separate Performance Indicator Reference Sheet (PIRS).  For each performance indicator, the table should also include baselines and yearly and cumulative targets, data collection tools, data sources, types of data disaggregation, and frequency of monitoring and evaluation;  There should also be metrics to capture how project activities target the most at risk and vulnerable populations or addresses their concerns, where applicable.

## Additional Information

DRL will not consider applications that reflect any type of support for any member, affiliate, or representative of a designated terrorist organization.

Applicants should be aware that DRL understands that some information contained in applications may be considered sensitive or proprietary and will make appropriate efforts to protect such information.  However, applicants are advised that DRL cannot guarantee that such information will not be disclosed, including pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) or other similar statutes.

The information in DRL's NOFO and this PSI for Applications, as updated in July 2015, is binding and may not be modified by any DRL representative.  Explanatory information provided by DRL that contradicts this language will not be binding.  Issuance of a NOFO and negotiation of applications does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. government.

DRL reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the project evaluation requirements.

**Background Information on DRL and general DRL funding**

DRL is the foreign policy lead within the U.S. government on promoting democracy and protecting human rights globally. DRL supports projects that uphold democratic principles, support and strengthen democratic institutions, promote human rights, prevent atrocities, combat and prevent violent extremism, and build civil society around the world. DRL typically focuses its work in countries with egregious human rights violations, where democracy and human rights advocates are under pressure, and where governments are undemocratic or in transition.

Additional background information on DRL and its efforts can be found on **www.state.gov/j/drl** and **www.humanrights.gov**.